

Thai task force celebrate New Year

Story and photos by
Pfc. Christina Carde
11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — Staying dry and feeling down were not options at the Thai engineer compound during their New Year celebration Sunday, as Thai, American and coalition forces joined together to enjoy the largest Thai celebration of the year.

Even with only four weeks in country and many missions to accomplish, the Thai soldiers proceeded with the festivities not only to ring in the New Year, but to foster positive relations with other forces on Bagram.

"This celebration has been a

—See **THAI**, Page 5



Beating large colorful drums and singing songs from the homeland, were part of the festivities at the Thai New Year celebration Sunday.

Pager system installed to save lives

Story and photos by
SpC. Debralee Crankshaw
11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — Pagers and cell phones are the fruits of our technology, but few people would think they would see them in a field environment.

Task Force-44 purchased 30 pagers and the necessary equipment to run them for the vital hospital staff.

The Motorola Bravo pagers cost \$135 each and have a range here of eight miles. Bad weather may cause the range to shorten a mile or two and good weather

can increase the range 10 miles.

The entire system cost approximately \$7,200, including the 30 pagers, the transmitter and all other parts of the system. The system can hold 99 users.

The pagers only beep now, but SpC. Walter Blackston, communications, 48th Combat Support Hospital, Fort Meade, Md. is working to make the numeric page work. The only difference between these and those back home is back home pagers are run on phone lines so the range is farther.

The pagers were bought because the hospital needed radios for more people, but the radios



Pagers were issued to some essential hospital staff. The pagers were a cost efficient way to keep the hospital staff available.

cost \$3,500 a piece. This was too expensive so Blackston and the previous personnel officer discussed it and decided radios at that cost was too expensive so they looked for something else. They researched and found the

pagers.

"We didn't know if it would work, but we thought we'd give it a try," said Blackston.

It took two weeks for Blackston to set up the system.

Another reason the pagers were bought was because there was a lot of over-

head paging in the hospital so people were not getting sleep. With this new paging system a lot of overhead pages are eliminated.

—See **PAGER**, Page 6

World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



A volunteer Iraqi police officer and a U.S. soldier detain suspected looters in Baghdad on Monday.

Major fighting apparently over

WASHINGTON — Major U.S.-led fighting in Iraq appears to be over, although some smaller confrontations continue, Pentagon officials said Monday.

“I would anticipate that the major combat engagements are over,” Maj. Gen. Stanley McChrystal told reporters at a Pentagon briefing. He said U.S. forces are moving into a phase of “smaller, albeit sharper fights.”

McChrystal said the number of daily air missions had dropped to 700 or 800 in recent days, down from about 1,000 or more a day. And Monday, he said, marked the last day that aircraft from all five aircraft carriers would fly missions over Iraq.

Plans were announced to scale back the American naval presence in the Persian Gulf by bringing home two carrier groups in the coming days.

The USS Kitty Hawk and USS Constellation could leave the Persian Gulf in the next several days, officials said. That would leave the USS Nimitz, which recently replaced the USS Abraham Lincoln, as the only remaining carrier group in the gulf.

Officials also said one of the two groups in the Red Sea, the USS Harry S. Truman or the USS Theodore Roosevelt, could depart soon.

Coalition fighting Monday against Iraqi targets in Tikrit, Saddam Hussein’s hometown, was not as fierce as some expected. McChrystal said the Iraqi forces there lacked a “coherent defense.”

Still, he cautioned against any sugges-

tion that danger had passed for coalition forces.

Chemical laboratories found

KARBALA — U.S. troops believe they have found 11 mobile chemical and biological laboratories buried south of Baghdad outside Karbala, a U.S. general said Monday.

No chemical or biological weapons were found along with the labs, but soldiers recovered “about 1,000 pounds” of documents inside them, said Brig. Gen. Benjamin Freakley of the Army’s 101st Airborne Division.

U.N. weapons inspectors in February “found nothing untoward” at an ammunition filling plant close to where the United States says troops have found the labs, a U.N. inspection team spokesman said Monday.

In February, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell told the U.N. Security Council that Iraq had mobile biological weapons labs on at least 18 flatbed trucks.

Disarming Iraq of its alleged weapons of mass destruction had been among the coalition’s foremost goals entering the war, officials said. To date, there have been no confirmed discoveries of any such weaponry.

The “only significant combat action” Monday took place in Tikrit, the lone major Iraqi holdout, said Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks of U.S. Central Command.

In a further sign that the war’s major fighting apparently is over, Pentagon sources said 20,000 members of the 1st Cavalry Division are not expected to deploy to Iraq in the immediate future.

Similarly, only part of the 20,000-member 1st Armored Division, based in Germany, will deploy to the region.

U.S., Britain warn Syria

WASHINGTON — U.S. and British officials turned up the diplomatic heat Monday on Syria, with the White House continuing to accuse Iraq’s neighbor of developing chemical weapons and warning it not to harbor members of Saddam’s regime.

Powell called on Syrian leaders to “review their actions and their behavior, not only with respect to who gets haven in Syria and weapons of mass destruction, but especially the support of terrorist activity.”

Calling Syria a “state that sponsors terrorism,” White House press secretary Ari Fleischer quoted from a 2002 CIA report that Syria “already held nerve gas ... but is trying develop more toxic and persistent nerve agents.”

“There are acceptable standards of behavior that the world and certainly the free Iraqi people hope will be followed by its neighbors, including Syria,” Fleischer said, “and part of that is not to harbor Iraqi leaders.”

British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said Damascus needed to show it is cooperating with the coalition’s efforts to find Saddam and other Iraqi fugitives as well as ease concerns over its weapons program.

Mexican villagers stone ‘witch’

SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS — An angry crowd stoned to death an Indian man accused of practicing witchcraft in a southern Mexico town with a long tradition of religious violence.

The man, Domingo Shilon Shilon, was also hacked with machetes Sunday by the crowd in San Juan Chamula, a majority Catholic township on the outskirts of the colonial city of San Cristobal, 460 miles southeast of Mexico City.

Shilon, 50, was caught by the crowd in a neighborhood known as Rancho Narvaez, state police said. After killing him, the crowd partially burned his body.

Shilon, like most of his alleged attackers, was a Tzotzil Indian, a branch of the Maya. The Chiapas state Justice Department said an investigation was continuing into the killing, but it is often difficult to prosecute such cases, given that witnesses are frequently unwilling to testify.

The villagers killed the man after they went to a cave he frequented and found bottles dressed in the local Indian garb, objects he allegedly used in casting spells on people.

U.S. News (Compiled from CNN.com)

Man pleads guilty to conspiring to aid Taliban

SEATTLE — A Seattle man under investigation for ties to Islamic terrorists pleaded guilty Monday to charges of conspiring to support the Taliban, the former rulers of Afghanistan.

Under a plea agreement, James Ujaama pleaded guilty to providing support, including cash and computer technology, to the Taliban, and agreed to cooperate with prosecutors in their pursuit of a radical Islamic cleric in London.

Ujaama is expected to testify against Abu Hamza al-Masri if and when he is formally charged, officials said Monday. Authorities have claimed al-Masri is an important terrorism recruiter, and officials believe he sent followers from London to Oregon to establish a terrorism training facility.

Although the conspiracy charge to which Ujaama pleaded guilty carries a penalty of up to 10 years, a statement issued by the Justice Department said the agreement calls for Ujaama to serve two years in prison — including time served — and three years of supervised release.

A sentencing date has not been set.

Scientists map suspected SARS virus genome

ATLANTA — Researchers in Canada and the United States, working independently, announced they sequenced the genome for the suspected cause of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome.

Researchers can use the information “to begin to target antiviral drugs, to form the basis for developing vaccines, and to

develop diagnostic tests that can lead to early detection,” said Dr. Julie Gerberding, director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Already, a number of laboratory tests look promising, Gerberding said.

The mystery illness, which appears to have originated in China late last year, has spread to 21 countries, infecting 3,169 people and killing 144, according to the World Health Organization.

Computers at the British Columbia Cancer Agency in Vancouver completed work Saturday on the coronavirus, a new form of which is thought to cause SARS, the agency said.

Gerberding told reporters Monday: “Today, CDC has followed suit and has published the sequence of the virus.”

“This is a huge step forward in the fight to control the spread of SARS,” said Dr. Caroline Astell, projects leader at the Genome Sciences Centre.

Four students shot at New Orleans high school

NEW ORLEANS — Gunmen armed with an AK-47 rifle and a handgun opened fire in a packed high school gym Monday, killing a 15-year-old boy and wounding three teenage girls in a spray of more than 30 bullets that sent students scrambling for cover.

Four suspects, ranging in age from 15 to 19, were arrested in a sweep of the neighborhood near John McDonogh High School, about a mile north of the French Quarter. Police Chief Eddie Compass said he did not know if the suspects attended the school.

At least 200 students were in the gymnasium when the four suspects entered the building.

Police identified the victim as Jonathan Williams. Police had not determined a motive Monday night, but students said the shooting was apparently gang related and may have been retaliation for a previous fight.

“They started shooting and I started running,” said ninth-grader Garick Jacob, who was in the gym when the shooting began. “I was really scared.”

The gunman managed to slip out of the gym and the suspects were arrested about three blocks away. Two were in a getaway vehicle and two others were at a nearby house.

It was not immediately clear how the gun got through metal detectors and guards at the school. Students and school security officers said there was a hole in the fence near the gym.

School board member Elliot Willard said students told him that the boy was the target and the girls were accidental victims.

Leon Myles, a 17-year-old junior, said he knew Williams. “He was an OK guy,” he said. “It was probably gang stuff.”

Peterson investigators examine bodies

RICHMOND, California — Modesto police investigating



Laci Peterson has been missing since Dec. 24.

the disappearance of Laci Peterson, the pregnant woman missing since Christmas Eve, arrived in Richmond, California, on Monday to examine two bodies, one a woman, one a baby, that have washed ashore in a park in the past two days.

Modesto police spokesman Doug Ridenour said the investigators will be working with local officials to identify the woman’s body, which was found Monday on the park’s San Francisco Bay shoreline.

Richmond is 80 miles northwest of the Petersons’ home in Modesto. Ridenour said there is “no indication at this point” that the remains are those of Laci Peterson, who disappeared from Modesto on Christmas Eve.

Chief Norman Lapera of the East Bay Regional Parks Police Department said remains were of “a badly decomposed body settled among the rocks.”

The remains have been taken to the Contra Costa County Coroner’s Office, Lapera said.

Making sure servicemembers remain unthreatened

There has been an increase of verbal harrassment and inappropriate physical contact from local day laborers toward female soldiers. These actions will not be tolerated.

Any person observing such behavior should immediately notify the Provost Marshall’s Office to ensure appropriate action is taken.

Pay forum a success

Story by Capt. Monica Sneed
126th Finance Battalion

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — A reserve pay forum was held Saturday at the North Dining Facility.

The purpose of this forum was to clarify the difficulties in reading a reserve Leave and Earnings Statement to all servicemembers who have had or are currently having pay problems and to supervisors of National Guard/ Reserve service members.

Many of the pay issues addressed stem from home station/mobilization station inputs or lack thereof.

Energizing and training these stations on documentation required for starting entitlements was a solid recommendation from this audience.

Congruently, finance training for key leaders, itemizing required documents needed at different deployment stages, is also key in ensuring entitlements are started in a timely manner.

Tax refund was a concern for many at the forum, and was partially alleviated once servicemembers understood that their taxes are refunded on a separate LES that is paid between the third and seventh of the month.

Refunds and obtaining corrected W2 forms were also addressed and the process clarified.

"My Pay" temporary pins were also distributed at this forum, allowing service members to log onto "My Pay" five days later. This allows service members to print all LESs from the current month and two months back.

The Bagram finance office, in conjunction with the theater finance office, is dedicated to fixing not only deployment entitlements but also reserve home station entitlements.

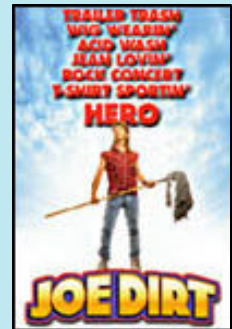
Their goal is for all deployment entitlements to start one week after arrival in country.

Another forum is scheduled for May 17. Site to be determined.

Bagram Air Base MWR presents

1530Z at the MWR building: "Joe Dirt."
Joe Dirt is a janitor with a mullet hairdo, acid-washed jeans and a dream to find the parents that he lost at the Grand Canyon when he was a belligerent, trailer park-raised eight-year-old. Joe hits the road alone in search of his folks.

Tomorrow's movie will be "Panic Room"



Local weather

TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER FORECAST:

	Today	Wednesday
Bagram:	Rain H: 72F L: 52F	Partly cloudy H: 75F L: 52F
Kandahar:	Rain H: 84F L: 68F	Haze/Dust H: 86F L: 64F
Kabul:	Rain H: 75F L: 53F	Partly cloudy H: 82F L: 50F
Uzbekistan:	Mostly cloudy H: 59F L: 52F	Mostly cloudy H: 61F L: 49F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

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CJTF-180 Commander —

Lt. Gen. Dan McNeill

CJTF-180 Command Sergeant Major —

Command Sgt. Maj. Steven R. England

Public Affairs Officer —

Col. Roger King

Public Affairs Sergeant Major —

Vacant

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Commander — Maj. William Mott

NCOIC — Staff Sgt. Christina Bhatti

Editor — Sgt. W. Cullen James

Journalists — Spc. Debralee P. Crankshaw,

Pfc. Christina Carde, Pvt. 2 Terri Rorke

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tradition in Thailand for hundreds of years,” said Maj. Siraphop Supavanich, commander, 975th Thai Engineer Task Force. “It’s a three-day celebration where family and friends get together to share good times and forget old grievances.”

As part of the festivities, the Thai soldiers greeted all of the celebration’s guests by dousing them with water and then applying a coat of baby powder to each individual’s face.

“The water signifies homage, respect and penance for wrongdoings,” said Supavanich. “Traditionally, a young man or junior member of a family will pour water on the hands of the eldest family member to ask forgiveness for a crime or insult and make a truce. The powder is for decoration to signify happiness and relaxation.”

Aside from having a ghost-like appearance and being drenched from head to toe, the participants of the festivities enjoyed games, food, music and an unforgettable cultural experience.

“The celebration usually lasts three days,” said Supavanich. “The first day is the ceremony, the second day is for family, where Thais all over the world come back to Thailand for a big reunion, and the last day is for celebration.”

Other festivity traits such as colorful clothing, decorations, drums and chanting were all in place to portray fun, happiness and brotherhood.

“Our colorful clothes, decorations, music and loud chanting, is to let everyone know how happy we are,” said Supavanich. “It is



Loud chanting and yelling led off the Thai New Year celebration Sunday as the Thai engineer's way of telling Bagram, "we're here."

also to promote brotherhood and invite outsiders to join in.”

Their reasoning behind having the celebration here is different than at home.

“One of the main reasons for this celebration was to get to know our Korean brothers better,” said Supavanich. “We both have the same mission here, so we wanted to show them our hospitality.”

Additionally, like all other forces, the Thai want to leave their mark on Bagram.

“We have only been here one month and we have noticed that there are people here from all over the world,” said Supavanich. “This celebration was a good way to meet different people, share our traditions and let them know what we are about.”



Thai soldiers release a shout of joy, inviting everyone on Bagram to join their celebration.



As part of the celebration, Thai soldiers soaked American and coalition forces with water and masked their faces in powder to welcome them to their festival.



Spc. Walter Blackston, communications, 48th Combat Support Hospital, Fort Meade, Md., speaks to some of the hospital personnel about their new pagers. The pagers were a cost efficient way to keep the hospital staff available.

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“This is a 24-hour operation so there is always someone sleeping,” said Blackston.

With the pagers, essential hospital personnel can go about their lives without worrying about being needed and not being able to be contacted.

“The doctors and nurses don’t have to feel restricted to the hospital. They can go to the PX, the chow hall and the Bazaar,” said Blackston.

It is important to contact the doctors and nurses quickly according to Blackston.

“The pagers will be used in emergency situations and getting in touch this way is very important. It could save a life because the response time should be faster. It is very timely – that’s the whole concept,” said Blackston. “It is well worth the cost if we save a life.”

Baseball season begins in Orgun-E

Story and photo by
Capt. Alayne Cramer
CJTF-180 Public Affairs

ORGUN-E, Afghanistan — The convoy drove through the town of Orgun-E and passed by an empty field that brought back memories for some members of the Civil Affairs Team-Alpha based there.

The field was once filled with Afghan children playing baseball under the watchful eye of U.S. soldiers.

The only tangible evidence from last season is a baseball mural painted by an 82nd Airborne Division soldier.

The baseball season for the children of Orgun-E kicked off this week and they will play their first game Friday, said Staff Sgt. Fred Masi, civil affairs sergeant, 478th Civil Affairs Battalion.

He anticipates five teams to be fielded this year but it all depends on who shows up at the first practice and then the teams are divided up.

The idea to sponsor baseball teams for the children of Orgun-E came about last year said Masi.

The children were already playing soccer, volleyball, and cricket so the previous civil affairs battalion decided to make a contribution of their own. Through U.S. Special Forces soldiers, equipment was donated



An 82nd Airborne Division soldier painted this mural overlooking the baseball field in Orgun-E, Afghanistan. The mural depicts Afghan children playing baseball for the first time there last year.

from the states and with the assistance of the CAT-A and the Operational Detachment Alpha here, two children’s teams were fielded.

Coordination for this year’s season began with the Orgun-E Minister of Education and the local boys school said Maj. Rupert Betancourt, civil affairs team leader, 478th Civil Affairs Battalion. Teachers announced the baseball season March 22, the beginning of the school year, which gets all the interested children at the first practice, he said.

Betancourt said soldiers from the company of 82nd Airborne Division stationed at the firebase in Orgun-E will provide security, coaches and maybe umpires for the season. They augment the CAT-A and assist with the logistical requirements required for a successful season.

“We try to incorporate the locals as

much as possible,” said Betancourt. “We want to get the locals participating more and more at the coaching and umpire level. We will still be behind the scenes but want them to be more active.”

Although the turnout of children may field up to five teams, there is only enough equipment for two teams said Masi.

He said that in the past, the teams had to share gloves and swap them out between innings.

The equipment is stored in the civil affairs warehouse in Orgun-E.

Masi said the season starts in April and finishes in November, right before Ramadan. Last year, the children wanted to play past Ramadan but the teachers denied the request because of the onset of cold weather.

See **BASEBALL**, Page 7



Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from ESPN.com)

BASEBALL, from Page 6 —

After helping out with the season last year, Masi thinks baseball is a positive experience for the children.

“For the kids, it’s great,” said Masi. “The kids see us giving. I think it helps them to understand us more.”

Masi also thinks it is a positive experience for the soldiers that assist with the season.

“Living on a firebase makes you realize that you are locked in your camp and you don’t have a lot of interaction with the locals,” said Masi. “Sponsoring the teams puts more of a human feel on the mission.”

Expectations for this year’s season are very high in Orgun-E.

The only downside to the planning process has been accommodations for the girl’s baseball team.

Due to Muslim traditions, Betancourt said the girl’s cannot play in the open field. The CAT-A has asked the locals to find another place but will have to push harder to get that initiative off the ground.

Betancourt feels the most rewarding part of sponsoring baseball for the children of Orgun-E is seeing their happy faces as they hit the ball across the field and run through the bases.

“It’s a great feeling seeing the kids playing organized sports,” said Betancourt.

“There are no other organized sports for them to play so seeing them exercising and working together and us interacting with them is the best reward for our efforts.”

Spurs sew up top seed with 12th win in 13 games

SALT LAKE CITY — Tim Duncan didn’t want to be congratulated after the San Antonio Spurs clinched the top playoff seed in the Western Conference and a third straight Midwest Division title Monday night.

“It is nice, but I think we’re going to go out and try to win this thing,” Duncan said after scoring 21 points in a 91-83 win over the Utah Jazz.

Winning for the 12th time in 13 games and beating the Jazz for the 13th straight time, the Spurs made sure Wednesday’s home game against Dallas won’t matter. Dallas, which opened the season 14-0 but has struggled lately, can still tie the Spurs by winning at San Antonio on Wednesday, but the Spurs hold the tiebreaker with a better conference record.

“We knew there were a lot of games left early on in the season when they jumped out to that big lead,” said Duncan, who scored 15 in the third quarter and finished with 15 rebounds and nine assists.

Tony Parker scored 25 and Emanuel Ginobili scored 14, including a 3-pointer that ended the Jazz’s final comeback attempt.

“I’m proud of the team, but it’s just beginning,” Parker said.

“We’re going to make a run for it. Our goal is not to win the conference or get the No. 1 seed, it’s to win the championship.”

Karl Malone led the Jazz with 20 points and seven rebounds.

Andrei Kirilenko added 18 points off the bench and Matt Harpring scored 12 for Utah, which hasn’t beaten San Antonio in more than three years.

“We ran into the same thing we always run into. They are tough defensively. They really make it difficult,” Utah coach Jerry Sloan said. “One thing they do as well as anyone we play against is they take us right out of our offense.”



Tim Duncan had 21 points and 15 rebounds against Malone’s Jazz.

About the best news for the Jazz on Monday was that there was no chance of facing the Spurs in the playoffs. Utah, which hasn’t beaten San Antonio since Feb. 6, 2000, closes the regular season Wednesday at Sacramento, where the Jazz also will begin the playoffs this weekend.

San Antonio led 44-37 at halftime and pulled away early in the third as the Jazz struggled from the field. Utah didn’t make a field goal in the third until Kirilenko’s tip-in cut San Antonio’s lead to 52-41 with 7 minutes remaining.

Parker made another jumper, then Malone got the Jazz back within four points, but Ginobili ended the comeback with a 3-pointer that made it 88-81 with about 50 seconds left.

“We kept fighting back but it seemed like they just kept making their shots at the end,” Harpring said.

Parker's missed dunk makes Detroit top seed

AUBURN HILLS, Mich. — The Detroit Pistons clinched the No. 1 seed in the Eastern Conference playoffs Monday night, escaping with an 89-88 victory over Cleveland when Smush Parker's dunk attempt bounced off the back rim as time expired.

The win, combined with New Jersey's loss to New Orleans, ensures that Detroit will finish with the top spot in the conference. The Pistons have a one-game lead over the Nets with one game remaining, but Detroit owns the tiebreaker.

The final seconds of the Nets' loss were shown live on the scoreboard, and the crowd cheered loudly when that game ended and the Pistons had clinched. It will be the first time since 1990 that Detroit is the No. 1 seed.

Nets out of running for top seed after defeat

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — Baron Davis scored 19 points and New Orleans Hornets limited New Jersey to 11 fourth-quarter points in keeping the Nets from clinching a second straight Atlantic Division title with an 87-74 victory Monday night.

New Jersey's loss, coupled with Detroit's victory over Cleveland, gave the Pistons the top seed in the Eastern Conference.

Jamal Mashburn added 17 points and P.J. Brown had 14 as the Hornets won their fourth straight and kept alive their hopes of gaining homecourt advantage for the first round of the playoffs.

New Orleans (46-35) is a half-game behind Indiana (46-

34) and could catch Philadelphia (47-33) if the Sixers lose both of their remaining games and the Hornets defeat Atlanta in their regular-season finale Wednesday.

Team USA completes first half of 2003 roster

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — Two-time Olympic gold medalist Karl Malone of the Utah Jazz and rising NBA star Mike Bibby were added Monday to the national team that will compete in the Olympic qualifying tournament in August.

The selection of veteran Malone and Bibby, who led the Sacramento Kings to last season's NBA Western Conference Finals, completes half of the 12-player roster that will be finalized later this spring. Ray Allen of Seattle, Tim Duncan of San Antonio, Jason Kidd of New Jersey and Tracy McGrady of Orlando already were selected.

Malone, 39, could become only the second player, after David Robinson, to represent the United States on three Olympic teams. The 6-foot-9 forward, second on the NBA career scoring list, was chosen as one of the 50 greatest players in NBA history.

After shooting, man drives Iverson's car

PHILADELPHIA — Basketball star Allen Iverson was nearby when a friend was shot outside a nightclub early Monday, police said.

Larry Robinson, 46, of Smithfield, Va., drove himself to a hospital in Iverson's car after he was shot in the leg about 2:30 a.m. outside the Glam nightclub in the Old City sec-

tion of Philadelphia, police said.

At the time, Iverson was on a sidewalk "in the vicinity of that nightclub," police spokesman Cpl. Jim Pauley said.

"Iverson came to the hospital to visit him a short period after the shooting occurred," Pauley said.

Police interviewed Iverson, who was excused from Monday's practice by Philadelphia 76ers coach Larry Brown.

The team wasn't certain if Iverson would make the trip to Chicago for Tuesday night's game against the Bulls.

It wasn't immediately clear whether Iverson witnessed the shooting, or why he didn't drive his friend to Thomas Jefferson University Hospital. The hospital declined to release details of Robinson's condition.

Paxson thanks Reinsdorf for 'taking a chance on me'

DEERFIELD, Ill. — The Chicago Bulls are entrusting their future to part of their glorious past.

John Paxson, whose game-winner clinched the 1993 NBA title, was officially introduced as Chicago's executive vice president of basketball operations Monday.

He replaces Jerry Krause, who resigned unexpectedly a week ago, citing health reasons.

"I'm tremendously excited about this opportunity," Paxson said at a news conference, the Bulls' six golden NBA trophies sitting just a few feet away.

"I understand how big a challenge it is. But I feel very lucky that I'm stepping into a position where we have so much potential, so much upside. ... Ultimately, our goal is to get this franchise to win."

Stocked with young talent, the Bulls have shown promise this year.

But they're still 29-52 going into Tuesday's season finale against Philadelphia, and they won just three road games all year.

"Now for the real miracle in modern technology, getting all this stuff to fit in your ALICE pack"



kevin_kilgore@hotmail.com

By Kevin Kilgore

Laugh Support